

The Flayed by gh2345

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Summary: Billy Hargrove was just your average 80's bad boy with a job, a girlfriend, and a dream until one fateful night it was all ripped away. He finds himself in a dark place and his mind is now held captive by an evil entity with a hunger for revenge. Will he be able to protect the woman he loves or will he give in to the will of the new darkness that has decided to overtake his mind?

1. Birthday Plans

Have you ever thought about how you'd die? I have, over and over again I have theorized on how I would finally take my last breath. I always thought it'd be at the hands of my father who's a different kind of monster, but never in a million years did I think it'd be like this. How'd I get here and how'd it come to this? Perhaps I should start from the beginning, it was the summer of 1985 and I was getting ready to end my short time here in Hawkins, Indiana. Little did I know that it'd be because my life was ending and not because of the plan I had to leave the small town.

Chapter 1: Birthday Plans

It's always interesting coming into work, mostly because of the moms that bring their kids to the pool just oggle me during my shift like a bunch of vultures. It is not so bad, I am able to get a good tan and make some money before going out on the road to California. It is crazy to think that after a very interesting year here in Hawkins I finally get to go home. Today started like any other, I got to work and clocked in. I went into the locker room to change and when I came out all eyes were on me. Teenage girls stopped and stared as I walked by. The community moms wave and greet me in unison. I give them a friendly smile and a hello in return. Then, I see it. From across the pool I see the same kid who's been giving me problems since I got this job and he's running, again. That's it, I'm sick of this shit.

I blow my whistle and yell, " Hey, lardass, no running on my watch! If I catch you running again you're banned for life! Do you wanna be banned for life lardass," he shakes his head no. I blow my whistle again and everyone continues with what they were doing. I head up the lifeguard tower and officially start my shift watching kids play, making sure they are following the rules, and that no one drowns. The rest of the day passed with nothing out of the ordinary. I tanned, yelled at kids trying to break the rules, Mrs. Wheeler tried flirting with me, nothing new. My shift ended and I went back to the locker room and change back into my clothes. I clock out and see her waiting for me. Margaret Henderson is someone no one, especially

myself, thought would end up with a guy like me. She's smart, compassionate, determined, sarcastic, beautiful, someone who deserves better than me. She deserves someone that can offer her more than late night drives and short lived thrills, but here she is wasting her time with me, Billy Hargrove "Keg King." She makes me a better person and I am still not sure what I offer her, but at least she's with me and I will take it that is until she realises I am not good enough for her and she moves on. Maggie meets me after work everyday and is never late. She looks so cute in her own work uniform. She got a job at the ice cream place in the new mall that just opened up and comes everyday to bring me ice cream on her break before heading back.

"I have a delivery for an S.S Butterscotch for a Mr. Hargrove? Hm, wonder who he is, he sounds handsome," she says with a smile. I walk up to her and wrap her in a hug, "I didn't know that this ice cream came with such a cute little sailor."

"Oh stop it Hargrove, flattery will get you everywhere."

"Oh really? Well what do I have to do to get a night alone with you sailor? After all it is your birthday."

She giggles, "Are you saying you'd like to take me out?"

"Well, I do remember you saying that your mom left to go pick up your brother from camp and it would not be fair for you to be all alone on your birthday," I give her a smile, "Why don't you meet me at the Motel 6 out on Cornwallis after work tonight and I can give you an extra special birthday gift for your eighteenth birthday?"

"I think you have got yourself a date mister," she says, biting her lip before moving in for a kiss. We stay there kissing for a long time, my hand moves from her back to under her sailor skirt and I give her butt a firm squeeze. She pulls away with a squeak and flushed face and gently gives my chest a smack. "Here take your ice cream before it melts. I have to get back but I will see you tonight, okay?"

"Alright, see you tonight sailor," I wave as she leaves. I have a couple of hours to kill before meeting her so I decided to spend them picking up supplies. I go to the general store to pick up flowers, drinks, and

other essentials for the night. After that I pick up Max and take her to the arcade to meet with her friends. As much as I hate her hanging out with that Sinclair kid at least it gets her out of my hair for a while. Then I start the trek to the Motel 6. The long, dark, and quiet road to the edge of town was interrupted by the sound of Iron Maiden's "The Number of the Beast" blasting through the speakers of my car. I was so distracted singing along to the heavy metal song playing that I didn't even notice what had hit the windshield until it was too late. There was a crash and I started spinning out of control. My car ended up smashing into some bushes by a warehouse. I get out of the car once it's stopped moving and hear noises.

I call out, "Who's there," no answer so I try again, "I said who's there?" That's when I feel it, something grabbing me and pulling my leg, dragging me underground and into the warehouse. Little did I know that this was the beginning of the end for me.

2. Getting Flayed

p style="text-indent: .5in; margin-bottom: .22in; font-variant: normal; font-style: normal; font-weight: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"It felt like I was being dragged forever and when it stopped I was in an incredibly dark room. It was empty and damp, I don't even know where I am exactly. As I frantically look around the more confused I become. How did I get here? Where is here? How will I get out? As all these questions are running through my head I hear it. A sinister voice./span/p

p style="margin-bottom: 0in; font-variant: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"span>You're perfect," it hisses, "You'll get me close. You'll bring me power." I had no idea where the voice was coming from, it almost sounded like it was coming from all around./span/span/p

p style="margin-bottom: 0in; font-variant: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"span>What the fuck are you," I yell back, "Show yourself!" /span/span/p

p style="margin-bottom: 0in; font-variant: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"span>Poor insolent human. You are nothing," the sound of its voice echoes as if it were coming from inside my head, "Do you think you could take me? Impossible but, I will take you. Your body and your mind will be mine and I will use you as I please." Just then I felt it, something else trying to slither up my leg. I try to run but more of these fleshy spindles start holding me in place. I prepare for the worst and that's when I feel a sharp pain in my neck. It burns as this creature injects me with what I can only assume is its own self. I suddenly feel trapped, a prisoner to my own mind and no longer in control of what I do. I feel so cold and it's almost as if I am watching a movie./span/span/p

p style="margin-bottom: 0in; font-variant: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"span>Now you're mine," The creature finally reveals itself to me in my mind's eye. It's gigantic and black. The body was almost spider-like but less hairy and more of a rough, rotting flesh

kind of look. It is grotesque and terrifying. The face has no other features besides a large mouth that resembles a leech. At this point I know I am doomed and I still have so many regrets. Most importantly, I just wanted to see her one last time, hear her laugh, and give her a kiss goodbye./span/span/span/p

p style="margin-bottom: 0in; font-variant: normal; line-height: 200%; text-decoration: none;"span style="background: transparent;"spanAh, yes she's perfect," I instantly regret thinking of Maggie. The creature can apparently read my thoughts and it gives me a heinous command, "Bring her to me and I will also make her mine." I try to resist but my body doesn't listen. My body moves to do its bidding and all I can do is watch./span/span/span/p

3. Painful Memories

There is a lot to be said about basically being trapped inside your own mind. It gives you time for all that self-reflection you said you'd do whenever you'd get in trouble but ultimately blow off. I look back on my life and remember when I was young. I was a happy kid, blonde hair, blue eyes, still loving the water even then. There was nothing like going down to the beach and smelling the waves as the wind carried the salty smell towards you and all around you. The water was cold, but it never bothered me much. It was welcomed on those scorching Californian days. There is one memory that sticks out to me the most when I think back on those good times. I was about 10 or 11 years old and my mother and I were at the beach, I was surfing. She really was a beautiful woman and I would like to think that I got all my looks from her. I can almost see it as a movie in my head. She was wearing a white sundress that was embroidered with blue flowers, a big, straw, floppy, sun hat, and she carried around her yellow sandals. It was cooler that day compared to the usual unbearable heat so she took me surfing. I remember that back then I was just starting to get really good at it and I had come running to her after riding the biggest wave I had seen so far.

I remember running back to her and joyfully exclaiming, "Did you see that? It must have been like seven feet!" She laughed and I went back to the water. I miss those days often.

I can't wait to take Maggie... Maggie, for the first time ever I don't want to see her. I hope she doesn't come to bring me ice cream. Will I ever get to see her as myself again or will I eventually become this monster? Whatever it takes, I can't let this thing get her.

I don't talk about it often, but she really did save me. My life after that day on the beach was nothing but dark times. My only light back then was my mother though even she couldn't stand it anymore and left. I felt like I had nothing else, the only tie I had left to her was the water and even that was taken away when my father got remarried and moved us to this craphole of a town. I can't despise all of it though after all this is where I got to meet Maggie and she quickly became my new light. She has always been a firecracker and very

unamused by childish bullshit. She was beautiful and easily could have rolled with the popular crowd but she didn't care about all that stuff. Our first meeting didn't go so well and I am surprised that she even decided to befriend me at all. I was a really huge ass to her and she was only trying to help me out. It was my very first day at Hawkins High School and she was assigned to show me around. I waited in the office like I was supposed to and when she arrived I was momentarily speechless. She seemed to be a little over five feet tall with long, blonde, curly hair and brown eyes. She was dressed simply in a striped long-sleeve shirt and high waisted denim pants and some beaten up converse sneakers. It was so simple and so ordinary, but to me, she was so beautiful.

"William Hargrove? Hello, I am Margaret Henderson and I am going to be showing you around today," She said with the biggest smile and an outstretched hand. I couldn't let her see what I was actually feeling so instead of taking her hand I pushed it down and gave her an eye-roll.

"It's Billy," I was trying to sound cool and it came off as ice cold. She just shrugged and then proceeded to show me around while I looked generally bored and uninterested.

The last place we had stopped on our tour was the locker rooms and that is where I realized that she was no ordinary girl. I decided that a secluded area would be the best place to apologize for my earlier rudeness and fix things. It didn't turn out that way, the "manly" demeanor that had been quite literally beaten into me for years wouldn't let me be seen as weak even at the risk of scaring her off. When we had gotten to the locker rooms I cleared my throat.

"Margaret you've been so kind showing me around," as I speak I move closer towards her eventually putting both my hands beside her shoulders and trapping her between myself and the wall behind her, "let me show you how grateful I am."

I close my eyes and lean in, but I never expected what she did next. The next thing I know is that I felt a harsh slap and then gentle hands moving me out of the way.

"I am sorry I slapped you, but you were going too far. You should

take a lady out before trying to get handsy in a grimey hallway. I don't know what it is that plagues you and makes you act like a brute Billy. You clearly have a kind heart somewhere in there and refuse to show it. Perhaps it'd be important to love yourself a little before seeking it from others. The tour is over now, see you around Hargrove."

With that, she left leaving me there dumbfounded and impressed. After that, I knew I didn't really want anyone else. She was more than just beauty and brains she had a strength that I could only wish for. Every other girl compared to her was just boring. All they would do is throw themselves at me and though it was good for a while to fill the void it wasn't enough. Nothing gave me the same rush as finding an excuse to talk with her or "accidentally" bumping into her in the halls or at parties. Even after all I have done, that's hurt her she is still here. I threatened her brothers' friends, I beat up her friend Steve, I treated her friends like garbage and yet she still wants to be with me all because of the day it all changed. It was the day when she came over to confront me about what I'd done to Steve Harrington and she witnessed what my home life was like. I had just gotten beat again by my father for not bringing Max home and walked out to get her when I saw her standing there outside.

"What do you want?"

"Nothing... I... What happened in there? I heard shouting and thuds."

"It's none of your business! Now move I have to go."

"Wait," she said and grabbed on to my jacket sleeve, "At least let me clean that up for you first. I have a mini first aid kit in my car." I was upset and she made me feel comforted. I knew what she was there to do, but I think she didn't want to add to my pain now that she had witnessed it. It was a kind gesture and I will remember that day forever as the one where she finally saw what my world looked like. I quietly went with her to her car and she cleaned up the small cuts on my face and bandaged me up. "Would you like me to give you a ride to get Max? I know where she is, she's a really sweet girl." I nodded, I didn't think I had the strength to speak. I was so horrible to this girl and yet she's here offering to help me. It was then that I realized how beautiful she was. Not just on the outside but on the inside too. She

didn't ask me if I was okay and she didn't try and pry. All she did was reach over to the glove compartment to put away the first aid kit and then grabbed a hidden pack of cigarettes taking one for herself and then offering me one. I took it and waited for the lighter to finish warming up. She is nothing like what I expected her to be. We spent the rest of the drive listening to her Judas Priest tape with the windows down and a trail of smoke following us.

The drive lasted for about ten minutes until she pulled up to a house, parked, and turned off the car.

"She's inside," she told me, "If I knew that you didn't know she was here or that it would have given you so much trouble I would have taken her back much sooner. I'm sorry." All I could do at that moment was laugh.

"So, I have done all these terrible things to your friends and you're apologizing to me? I don't get you, Margaret."

"Well, to be fair I was actually going over to yell at you, but now I realize that my suspicions about why you act the way you do were somewhat correct."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't think you're as much of a bad person as you think you are. You try so hard to act tough and now I see it's so that you don't feel weak around others." I wished she wasn't right, but she was. Still to this day, I wonder why I let my guard down with her perhaps maybe I was hoping that she could help pick up all my broken pieces inside. Taking the time to go through these memories leaves me feeling conflicted. It's bittersweet and by the time I finish my thoughts I have regained control of myself again.

4. The First Victim

Somehow I made my way back to the pool and with the creature in my mind laying fairly dormant I can now feel all the pain. It's excruciating, my body is burning. It's like having a fever so high that it could melt the flesh right off of you. I also notice how bright it is and I can barely see. Everything around me seems muffled and detached like a bomb just went off nearby and the ringing of the blast echos in my head. I chalk it up to being from the crash maybe my whole night had been a dream or I was unconscious until now. Either way, I decided to take my post on the lifeguard tower. Climbing up I realize just how much everything hurts but I just need to suck it up. I last maybe ten minutes on my post before I almost pass out from all the ringing and the brightness and the soreness of my body. Perhaps what I need is a cold shower that always helps when I'm hungover. So, I hop down from the lifeguard station and stumble my way to the locker room. I run to the first stall and throw on the cold water and sit on the ground letting it pour over me. Then I hear it, that shrill whisper once again.

"What are you doing fool!? You're supposed to be bringing me the girl!"

"No, I won't do it! You won't touch her I'll never let you. She's too good for your plans."

"Foolish mortal, you underestimate my power you will bring her to me. Whether or not you follow instructions means that she can either have a longer life or a painful death the choice is yours."

"Never! I won't let you hurt her. What do you need her for anyway?"

"Simple, she is close to the one I really want. Eleven, I want to consume her power to be complete again." Just then I hear her voice and I know chaos is about to ensue.

"Billy, I know you're in here. Come out we need to talk."

"Maggie, listen to me you need to leave!"

I hear the monster whisper to me, "Bring her to me."

"No," she yells at me her voice getting closer as she approached me, "I am not going anywhere until you tell me why you stood me up last night and where you were! Do you know how stupid I looked waiting in that dingy motel lobby for you?"

"Please Maggie, I will explain later but you really need to leave it's not safe for you here." I tried to plead with everything I had. At the same time, I was desperately fighting with my own body to remain still and not lunge for her. All the ideas this thing was putting in my head made me sick and I couldn't help but scream and cry as Maggie looked at me with concern instead of anger.

"Billy is everything alright? If you are in any kind of trouble let me try and help."

"No! You can't help it's too late for me, but not for you. You should run and never see me again."

"What!? Billy that's crazy come on just tell me what the deal is and we'll fix this together."

"Damnit Maggie, I said run!" At that moment I lost control. I lunged for her and grabbed her by the throat. I had her backed against one of the lockers in a firm grip. I don't want to hurt her, I can't do this. I try to muster up the strength to let her go. I. Won't. Hurt. Her. I muster enough strength to pull myself off her and stumble back into the shower.

"RUN!" I shout and she takes off. With her gone the beast inside relinquishes control of my body and I am left to my own devices once more. I go back to sitting on the tiled floor of the shower and sob. I just hurt the one person who took a chance on me. If I make it out of this she'll never want to be with me again. What have I done? What have I done? All the dreams and the plans we had ruined all because I had to go and get myself possessed by a murderous creature.

"Don't blame me, I only helped show you the truth"

"The truth!? You made me hurt the only person I actually care

about!"

"If you'd just bring her to me you can live together forever."

"If I bring her to you it won't be her anymore. I am already damned I will not let her be as well."

"Fine, so be it," it growled, "If not that girl then you must help bring me others. I need to rebuild myself in order to succeed."

"Gee, you really make it sound like you are giving me a choice here." For now, I go back to my self wallowing until I hear the door open again. They should also run away but they don't. The footsteps just got louder and louder as the second passed and I begged and pleaded to whoever would listen to my silent prayer that they'd just leave.

"Billy are you alright? I just saw Maggie run out of here and she looked terrified did something happen?" It was one of my coworkers Heather Holloway.

"Yeah, everything's fine Heather just go please." I'm not convincing enough. I know that she can hear how raspy my voice sounds.

"Are you sure? You don't sound okay," she says, "Did you guys break up or something?" She's behind me now. I want to scream at her and tell her that she should run too but before I can the creature takes hold of me again. I can't control myself anymore and it's like I'm watching everything happen from behind a screen. Every action I make now isn't my own and it's like I'm watching a movie.

"Billy are you sure you're okay?" Heather says again. She is walking closer to me now and she touches my shoulder. I feel her touch but I can't make my body stop doing what it does next.

"Oh Heather, you should have run too. Now you'll be mine." It's my voice talking to her but it's not my words. The voice of this mind-controlling creature speaks its will through me. I grab her hand and pull her into the shower with me and then begin to choke her until she passes out. When she's out I look around for rope and tape to tie her up with and then I hide her in my work locker until closing.

When it's dark and I know that no one is around I take her out of my

locker and put her into the trunk of my car and drive back to my new master. It seemed like such a short drive last time maybe because I wasn't paying attention but now it's as if the drive is taking forever. In my boredom, I decided to try and escape into my memories again. This time I can't seem to be let to any good times though just the ones that made me a heartless asshole in the first place. That one family dinner where my father blew his lid and hit my mom for the first time while in an argument. I remember trying to defend her but I got pushed away. After that my mom left, she left me with that monster of a man. I remember begging her to come back and not leave me over the phone. After that day, my father became even colder and he would often beat me saying that I was too soft and girly. I needed to learn how to be a man and not a little bitch, he thought his best lessons were the physical kind and while it led to me never being picked on it also led to me being severely fucked up.

The car finally stopped and I got out, opened the trunk, and felt a peculiar presence as if someone was watching me so I turn around. There is no one there, but I still feel a presence and I almost see an outline of a girl. After starting for a moment I turn back to the trunk and pick Heather up. With her, in my arms, we walked inside the warehouse and down to the basement. I laid her down in the middle of the room and waited for her to wake up. It took a while but she did.

"Don't move or scream, it will only make it worse." It felt so strange to hear my own voice and know that I wasn't actually speaking. I stepped away from her and waited knowing the creature was about to show it's true self to me again. It emerges from the shadows and lurks over Heather's body. She's trying to scream and fight but there is only so much she can do while tied up. I want to help her, I want to set her free but I can't move. I'm glued to the spot watching as this thing grows a long tentacle out its body and roughly connects it to Heather's neck. The tentacle writhes and pulses while it injects her with his own consciousness and I know that she is not like me. I can feel the presence again and wonder what it is but as soon as I feel it it's gone again. What could it be? Is this the presence of the girl that the creature wants? Maybe she can save me.

5. The Case of the Missing Lifeguard

I can finally move again and am now driving Heather home. She passed out after being possessed and I figured that the least I could do was get her home safe and maybe explain to her what's happening. I don't even know what is happening though. This whole situation seems incredibly fucked. The way to Heather's house was not long and we arrived soon. I assume her parents will be worried about her so I should probably get my story straight. Well, she had to close tonight anyway so I'll just tell them that she wasn't feeling good today and while closing she fainted. Yeah, it seems good enough. I park the car and turn it off. I take a deep breath before going to pick her up from the passenger's seat. Heather wasn't heavy and I was very grateful for it. I pride myself on being a strong man but everything I've been through the last 24 hours had left me tired and feeling drained. I walk up to her door and ring the bell, her father answers the door.

"Heather, sweetie? Oh my God, what happened?"

"Hello, Mr. Holloway. My name is Billy Hargrove I work at the pool with your daughter. Sorry to bring her home so late but we were closing and she just fainted. I thought to bring her home right away. She said she wasn't feeling well earlier today."

"Well, thank you, son, for bringing her home safely. Please come in I'll show you her room so you set her down." I follow him inside. It's such a nice little house much like what I've always imagined a good home to look like. Family portraits on the walls, framed and organized. Photos of Heather winning awards or doing activities, family vacations, little nick-nacks, everything I've always wanted and never had. I've often imagined that this is what my home would look like with Maggie. Oh, Maggie, how I want to tell you everything. I want you near me but if you are near me I'll destroy you. I can't run you like that, I've already wasted enough of your life. Mr. Holloway comes to a stop and ushers me into a room at the end of the hallway. It's just like any other teenage girl's room. Posters of make actors and singers, more family photos, a phone on the bedside table, and a vanity where she gets ready in the morning I assume. I set her on her

bed and turn to look at her father.

"If it's alright with you sir could I stay just until she wakes up? Just to make sure she's okay."

"I don't see why not, you did help her after all. Thank you again for bringing my little girl home safe and sound. As a matter of fact, to thank you will you join us for dinner tomorrow night?"

"Sure, thank you, sir." He left and I pulled up a chair from in front of the vanity and sat down next to her bed.

"Hah, I didn't pin you to be the polite type," Heather said during up from the bed. From the way she was talking I knew it wasn't really Heather though.

"So, is she even in there or is it just you?"

"Oh she's very much dead but her mind was delicious. I don't need her when I have you. At the moment she's just a means to an end. Once I have enough people I'll absorb them all and my body will be complete again."

"So tell me you ugly piece of shit, why do you need me? I'm still so confused as to why you're keeping me alive when you can clearly see my body however you like."

"Because you stupid fool, I need an anchor something to tether me to this world so I can regain my power and be whole once more. I can't very well use you as a tether if your dead since you'd no longer be in this world you understand?"

"So what if I just kill myself then?"

"Don't be so daft, you know if you ever tried I would just stop you. Now, you should go home we've got such a busy day tomorrow." I glare at what used to be Heather but do as I'm told anyway. I don't have the strength to argue with this thing tonight so I get up, put the chair back where it goes, and start to walk out the door.

"Oh and Billy," it calls before I could walk out, "I will get that girl you fancy so much one way or another."

I grimace at the thought and turn to say, "Over my dead body," before walking out.

When I finally get home it's late, very late but I'm lucky because that means everyone is asleep. The only thing that I've ever been grateful to my father for is how heavy of a sleeper he is. I sneak into the house still trying to be as silent as possible and head to my room. Once I'm safely in my room I take off my jeans and shirt. I notice that I'm still wearing my Lifeguard whistle and it had a bit of blood on it. Panicked I hide it in the cabinet of the en suite bathroom and get into bed to try and sleep. It's useless though, laying in bed becomes too hot very quickly and I guess it's because this creature likes it cold. I decide to sneak down to the kitchen and grab a couple large ice bags from the freezer. I haul them up to my room and take them into the bathroom to empty the bags into the tub. When each bag is emptied I turn on the cold water to start filling the tub. As it fills up I remove the rest of my clothes and get in. The water gets to a certain height and I turn it off. I feel like I can finally relax here in this tub so I lay back and close my eyes quickly falling asleep.